

School Wellness Coaches available to assist schools with obtaining a HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSC) Award

The Montana Team Nutrition Program is proud to introduce the four part-time regional School Wellness Coaches that have been hired to assist schools in achieving a HealthierUS School Challenge Award. They have been hired for part-time, (4-8 hours/week) ten-month positions (September through June) for areas of the state where schools have stepped up to achieve a HealthierUS School Challenge Award. Currently, these coaches are located in Billings, Great Falls, Miles City, and Missoula. They will assist Team Nutrition staff in Bozeman to work with schools across the state.

The HUSC Award is a national recognition program for schools that achieve specific criteria for nutritious lunches, nutrition education and physical activity. For more information on this award program go to this website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthierus/index.html>. If you are interested in taking the challenge, contact Montana Team Nutrition at kbark@mt.gov or Stenberg@montana.edu or one of the coaches in your area.

Introducing our School Wellness Coaches located in Billings, Great Falls, Miles City, and Missoula.



Billings Area

Virginia Lee Mermel, PhD, CNS, is a Healthcare Risk Management Consultant specializing in managing chronic disease via diet and activity. Owing to the high rates of adult and childhood obesity, much of her work has involved the management of weight and weight-driven diseases. Virginia's work on the AMA 2006 Expert Panel Report on Pediatric Obesity Treatment led to her appointment as Chair of the Billings Public Schools Health Advisory Council (SHAC) in Fall 2006. As Council Chair, Virginia has overseen a healthy makeover of Billings' school menus, development of fund-raising and concession stand guidelines and the development of a Backpack Meals Program that provides weekend and holiday meals to very low-income students who would otherwise go hungry. Virginia and the SHAC have earned local, state and national awards for hunger intervention and school wellness enhancements.

Virginia has a long-standing interest in community-based health projects. While living in California, she belonged to the Greater Area Nutrition Council as well as the Healthy Places 2000 and 2010 committees in San Luis Obispo County. She is a member of the Billings Action for Healthy Kids and the Yellowstone County Healthy Places Advisory Council. She currently serves as Public Policy Co-coordinator for the Montana Dietetic Association and Sponsorship Chair for the American Dietetic Association School Nutrition Services Dietetic Practice Group.

Virginia received her masters and doctorate in Nutritional Biochemistry with minors in Exercise, Physiology and Physiological Chemistry from the University of California, Davis. She's a Board Certified Human Nutrition Specialist (CNS). Virginia Mermel can be reached at virginia.mermel@montana.edu.

Great Falls Area



Kori LaLiberty is a Registered Dietitian and Licensed Nutritionist from Great Falls, Montana. She graduated from Colorado State University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in Food and Nutrition, and attended Utah State University, by a distance option, for a dietetic internship. This method allowed Mrs. LaLiberty to study online while still obtaining the experience in Montana. She also has experience with the treatment of food allergies.

Mrs. LaLiberty is a member of the Great Falls Action for Healthy Kids and understands the challenges of budgeting, planning and developing nutritious and good tasting meals. She looks forward to working with Montana schools to help them be recognized for all their hard work and achievements to make their schools healthy places to learn and grow. Kori LaLiberty can be reached at kori.laliberty@montana.edu.

Miles City Area



Beth Wiome, MBA, RD, CDE, LN is a Clinical Dietitian and Adjunct Faculty Instructor for Kaplan University from Billings, MT. She graduated from Montana State University in 2002 with a bachelor in Health and Human Development and received her MBA, with a Healthcare Management focus, from Colorado University Online in 2007. She is a member of the Academy of Nutrition, the Diabetes Practice Group, the Montana Dietetic Association and the Billings MDA.

Mrs. Wiome's professional positions including Director of Nutrition Services; Nutrition Coordinator for SP Health; Program Coordinator of the Diabetes Prevention Project; and Adjunct Faculty/Professor teaching various courses including Nutritional Assessment, Nutrition Management, Nutritional Biochemistry and Anatomy and Physiology I and II. Education is Mrs. Wiome's passion. As a Health and Wellness Coach she looks forward to the opportunity to incorporate her skills and desire to promote a healthy balanced lifestyle in Montana's Schools. Beth Wiome can be reached at elizabeth.wiome@montana.edu.

Missoula Area



Kelsey Gauthier is a Registered Dietitian and Licensed Nutritionist from Missoula, Montana. She graduated from Montana State University in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in Food and Nutrition, and attended the University of Delaware for a dietetic internship (by a distance option). This method allowed Ms. Gauthier to be able to study online while getting hands-on experience here in Montana.

Ms. Gauthier is very passionate about nutrition and believes that school meals can be nutritious and appealing to children. She looks forward to working with Montana schools to achieve the recognition for all their hard work in making their schools a healthy place for students to learn. Kelsey Gauthier can be reached at kelsey.gauthier@montana.edu.



For more information on the HealthierUS School Challenge Award Program go to this website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/healthierus/index.html>

or learn more about Healthy School Awards at the Montana Office of Public Instruction website:

http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/HealthyMT.html

